Increase in Economic Offences

2965. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been considerable increase in the economic offences during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the plans drawn up by Government to minimise these offences and to bring to took the culprists?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) On the basis of information available with the enforcement agencies, the Government have noticed some increase in the incidence of economic offences during the last three years.

(b) With a view to curb such offences, tax laws and related procedures have been simplified and rationalised. At the same time, enforcement agencies have been revamped and asked to maintain strict vigil and step up their preventive operations.

Proposal of Maharashtra Government to start a new airlines

2966. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given its clearance to the proposal of Maharashtra State Government to start new State-airlines i.e. Maharashtra airways;

(b) if so, which are the main take-off and lending stations on the Maharashtra airways map; and

(c) the terms of the agreement entered into with Government of Maharashtra in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Government of Maharashtra has no plans to start any airline. However the State Industrial and Investment Corporation of Maharashtra Limited has taken equity in Span Aviation India Limited - an existing Air Taxi Operator.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Relaxation of ECB norms for Telecom and Oil sector firms

2967. SHRI SATISH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the newsitem appearing in The Times of India of 21st June, 1996, under the caption "ECB norms relaxed for telecom and oil sector firms"; and

(b) if so, the details of the guidelines issued in this behalf?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have issued revised External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) Guidelines through a Press Release dated June 19, 1996, which, interalia, have permitted Corporates engaged in the infrastructure projects in Telecommunications and Oil Exploration and Development (excluding refining) to raise ECB at a minimum average maturity of 5 years even for borrowings exceeding USD 15 million equivalent. In addition, end-use of ECB in the Power, Railways and Telecommunications Sectors can be for project-related Rupee expenditure, including licence fees. Moreover, the maximum amount under the USD 1 million Scheme has been raised to USD 3 million, and exporters have been permitted to raise ECB to the extent of USD 15 million or the annual average exports during the previous 3 years, whichever is lower, for meeting project-related Rupee expenditure. Also, all infrastructure and greenfield projects have been permitted to avail ECB upto 35% of project cost.

Setting up of New Medical Colleges by the Central and State Governments

2968. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many new medical colleges have been set up by the Central and State Governments during the last three years in the country;

(b) reasons for not starting new medical